

TARGETING THE WASHINGTON JOB MARKET

Of great interest to many family members returning to the Washington area is the subject of employment. Currently, the employment situation in the Washington area is strong. Family members seeking employment will find a large variety of options available to them. Therefore, we would like to encourage all family members who are interested in employment to first do some in-depth self-assessment. This assessment will assist them in determining the type of employment they will find enjoyable. The assessment should include an inventory of their personal values, and attitudes as well as an assessment of their skills, talents and gifts. Once an individual is cognizant of these factors it is easier to determine the type of work and environment that would be most comfortable and enjoyable. Richard Nelson Bolles' best-selling job-hunting book, **What Color is Your Parachute?** is one excellent source of self assessment guides.

Family members will then need to begin the actual job search. The resources available are unlimited if access to the Internet is possible. First, the Family Liaison Office publishes a bimonthly newsletter, The Network, which addresses different aspects of the job search in each issue and lists numerous government and non-government positions. To receive this resource family members can write to the Family Liaison Office via e-mail and request to be placed on the mailing list. Additionally, there are a large number of excellent government and non-government job-hunting Websites that provide job listings and job seeking advice. The Network publishes a lengthy list of such websites and FLO published a guide to job searching via the Internet in the last edition of Direct Communications. To receive these publications just send a request to the FLO e-mailbox.

Family members interested in beginning work immediately upon returning to the U.S. need to be reminded to **hand carry** their resume, evaluations, SF-50s (USG personnel actions), and any other documentation they might need in their job search. The perfect job may be available immediately but be lost because the candidate is awaiting the arrival of their lost luggage, delayed air freight or household shipment that vanished somewhere between post and DC that holds all their important paperwork.

Once a family member arrives in the DC area there are many resources to which they have access. The first they should avail themselves of is the counseling of the Family Liaison Office **Employment Program Coordinator, Paula Riddle**. Paula will be especially helpful to family members seeking government employment by guiding them through the labyrinth of regulations and procedures and assisting them in avoiding the pitfalls.

Another DC resource is an employment workshop sponsored by the Overseas Briefing Center and held at the Foreign Service Institute. This workshop is entitled ***"Targeting the Job Market"*** and is offered four times each year. The next offering is on June 8 and 9. Interested family members should contact the Overseas Briefing Center to register. The participants of this workshop develop their job searching skills through hands-on experiences with self-assessment, networking, resume writing, and interviewing.

The Career Development Resource Center is another good resource for family members who are seeking employment. The Center has two licensed career counselors to assist family members in the completion of their Federal job applications and/or Federal resumes. The Center also has an extensive library of valuable job seeking tools including information on the abundant number of associations with headquarters or offices in the Washington area.

Family members returning to the Washington area may also enjoy using some of the job search resources located outside the government. There is **The Women's Center** in Vienna, Virginia and the website is www.thewomenscenter.org. Another resource is the **Commission for Women Counseling and Career Center** in Rockville Maryland with a website www.co.mo.md.us/cfw. The **Women's Business Center, Inc.** in Washington, D.C. can be contacted at www.womensbusinesscenter.org. Another excellent resource is the **Washington Post** online that lists job openings and publishes employment articles.

The booming job market Washington is experiencing means finding employment will not be too difficult. However, finding employment that is satisfying and enjoyable is always difficult. Please encourage your family members to take advantage of the valuable resources available to them. These resources can provide them with the necessary knowledge required for choosing the right job for them.